

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 CAPE T 00558 142135Z

ACTION SS-25

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FM AMEMBASSY CAPE TOWN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 5961

AMEMBASSY LONDON NIACT IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T CAPE TOWN 0558

EXDIS

3.9. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, XA

SUBJ: MEETING WITH PRIME MINISTER VORSTER ON OWEN MISSION

REF: (A) STATE 080424; (B) STATE 080423

1. I MET WITH PM VORSTER THIS AFTERNOON TO CONVEY THE POINTS CONTAINED REFTEL (A) IN SUPPORT OF THE OWEN MISSION. FONMIN BOTHA WAS PRESENT.

2. VORSTER EXPRESSED APPRECIATION. HE RECOGNIZED THAT US DECISION TO INVOLVE ITSELF SO DIRECTLY IS IMPORTANT NEW ELEMENT. HE WAS HIGH IN HIS PRAISE FOR FONSEC OWEN SAYING HE IS THE FIRST ENGLISHMAN HE HAS RUN ACROSS IN A LONG, LONG TIME WHOM HE FELT HE COULD COMMUNICATE WITH CANDOR AND COMPREHENSION. VORSTER SAID THAT DESPITE THESE FAVORABLE CONSIDERATIONS, HE WAS STILL SKEPTICAL ABOUT OUTLOOK. HE COULD GIVE IT NO BETTER THAN AN AMBER LIGHT. BIG DEFICIENCY IS LACK OF RESOLVE. HE SAID ASSUMING ALL FACTORS COMBINE TO MAKE POSSIBLE DRAFTING OF INDEPENDENCE CONSTITUTION AND HOLDING OF ELECTIONS, WHAT ASSURANCE IS THERE THAT THE US AND UK CAN MAKE IT STICK IF MUGABE OR NKOMO OR SOMEONE ELSE WITH THE GUNS OPPOSE IT? I OBSERVED THAT

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OUR JOINING THE BRITISH WAS DESIGNED TO STRENGTHEN THE EFFORT AND HIS CONCLUSION WAS TOO HASTY A JUDGMENT. WE SHOULD WAIT SEE CIRCUMSTANCES SURROUNDING THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS HE DESCRIBED. HE SAID, OF COURSE, HE WOULD COOPERATE BUT HE WAS STILL DOUBTFUL THAT THERE WAS ENOUGH RESOLVE IN THE WEST WHEN IT CAME TIME TO CRACK HEADS.

3. PM NOTED THAT SMITH'S POSITION HAS WEAKENED AND NOW
IS GOOD TIME TO LAUNCH NEW EFFORT. SMITH WAS STILL
IMPORTANT TO SOLUTION IN TERMS OF BRINGING WHITES ALONG.
THIS SHOULD BE KEPT IN MIND AS NEGOTIATIONS PROCEED.
BOWDLER

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NNN

Message Attributes

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